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# Reviewing Stand

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## Latin America in the World Crisis

A radio discussion over WGN and the Mutual Broadcasting System

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# Latin America in the World Crisis

MR. MCBURNEY: Gentlemen, where does South America stand in our struggle with Russia and her satellites? What positions have these South American countries taken in the United Nations?

MR. TAYLOR: All of the 20 Latin American nations are members of the UN and they have, as a rule, backed the United States in its power struggle with Russia. They have varied from time to time in their particular points of view, for example, in the re-acceptance of Trygve Lie which came up in October this year. There was opposition from the Latin American countries, but for the most part they stayed together.

## 'Stand United'

MR. STUNGEVICIUS: It is felt unquestionably in the Latin American countries that the Western Hemisphere is the last citadel of freedom in the world and if freedom is to be preserved in the world, the Western Hemisphere must stand united against those who would enslave the world.

MR. LIETZ: The most important decision taken, as far as the Western Hemisphere was concerned, was taken shortly after our decision on Korea, the United States decision on Korea when the organization of the American States, comprising the 21 states of the Western Hemisphere voted to endorse the UN Council action to send military help to Korea.

MR. MCBURNEY: They have voted with us pretty much?

MR. LIETZ: They have voted with us.

MR. MCBURNEY: Has their role been an active one, Taylor, or largely passive?

MR. TAYLOR: It varies on the issues. On some occasions they are very

active. Uruguay has been active and where Argentina's interests have been involved, Argentina has been active.

## Aid in Korea?

MR. MCBURNEY: Have these countries given direct aid in Korea?

MR. TAYLOR: Colombia has a battalion of troops under training now. They have a frigate assigned and it is in Korean waters at this time.

MR. STUNGEVICIUS: You must not overlook the fact that all of the nations of the Western Hemisphere have voted in favor of the United States' position on Korea. It is true that they must go through their internal processes of law in order to reach decisions. Then there is the question of consolidating the various offers of assistance that are provided, and it is up to the UN to determine to what extent it can accept these various offers.

MR. LIETZ: Yes, I think that is true. Perhaps it is a commentary on our own difficulties that Argentina has decided she can't send troops without the consent of her own congress.

MR. TAYLOR: There is one point to be considered from a military angle, the use of a large number of small groups of troops speaking a language which is not shared by most of the commanders in Korea. This would create something of a problem of coordination.

MR. JOHNSON: Only three nations have enough population to send armies of any strength to Korea and since we can't count on our own support in Argentina, only Brazil and Mexico would be able to make much of a contribution from the standpoint of men.

MR. LIETZ: It is evident there is great

good will when a country like Panama offers volunteers, transportation facilities within her own country and actual bases within Panama for training such Latin Americans as may wish to volunteer.

MR. JOHNSON: Such steps were taken in World War II. You will remember, most of those nations either placed bases at the disposal of the States or assisted in patrolling their own coast and cooperated in every way possible.

### Communist Sympathies?

MR. MCBURNEY: What factors, if any, tend to work against a cooperative political and military effort between the South American countries and the United States? Johnson, how strong are Communist sympathies in South America?

MR. JOHNSON: Frankly, I am not too worried about Communism in South America. Soviet trade and cultural relations have been fairly negligible. Communism thrives in countries where you have great industries and in most of the Latin American countries, industry is in its infancy. The rural population would be more attracted by a program of land redistribution than by a collectivization of agriculture, or by sweeping measures of state control in general. The upper and middle classes in Latin America would be opposed to Communism and in those countries where there are dictators, the army groups are on the conservative side. I must say, too, the Catholic church would be opposed inevitably to Communism.

MR. LIETZ: I think there is another aspect to it though. Perhaps the high point of the Communist threat occurred about the year 1947 and has since declined at least in outward form, but there is, and it is well known, an almost continental warfare going on at the labor level. For instance, in April of last year a meeting of a Communist-dominated Latin American labor union was held in Montevideo. Two projects were announced there as their program for

the Hemisphere: First, an all-out attack on what they designated as "Yankee imperialism"; and second, in case of a war with Russia, deprive the United States of any economic support in Latin America.

MR. STUNGEVICIUS: I think it is significant to point out that the businessmen of the Hemisphere have recognized that the problem lies in the economic freedom of their respective nations. They have started a crusade for free enterprise which was voted upon by the Congress of Business of the Inter-American Council held in Santos. That crusade has gone to the analysis of the underlying problems and has promoted a better understanding of the principles of individual freedom and of free trade and free economy. It has gone a long way toward the solution of these problems and these threats.

### Opposition in Unions

MR. TAYLOR: On the part of native organizations, local organizations in the Latin American countries, there is considerable opposition, however, to the attempt to dominate by the Communists in some of the unions. Then, too, the CIO and the AF of L are exerting considerable pressure, as they did in January at the Mexico City Conference.

MR. MCBURNEY: I am wondering, Stungevicius, whether our Marshall Plan in aid to Europe has worked against South America and has tended to alienate South America?

MR. STUNGEVICIUS: After the end of the war, the Latin Americans found that whereas they were selling under price ceilings, the price ceilings were removed shortly after the war in this country and the goods which they had to import had increased substantially in price. At the same time, the emphasis had been placed on a reconstruction of Europe. Where did that leave Latin America? Latin America felt it was essential for its own self-preservation to develop its industries and rebuild its worn-out equipment and machinery, and there-



fore requested an understanding of its position in this country after the war. The situation can be summarized this way: Latin America felt that it had not benefited from the aids that were given to foreign countries; but the position of the United States was that a reconstruction of Europe would later relieve from the United States the burden of furnishing all the industrial supplies to the rest of the world, and would also provide for a return to a more normal flow of trade between Europe and Latin America.

### Marshall Plan

MR. LIETZ: I might add there was considerable disappointment after the announcement of the Marshall Plan when at the meeting at Bogota in 1948, the same year, Marshall, our Secretary, told them that the Latin Americans could expect no help from that plan, that they must borrow from the Export-Import Bank if they needed capital, or else look to private sources for their investment capital. There are tremendous difficulties in that I think we will agree. For instance, in trying to get private capital, many of these countries must find themselves under the necessity of making concessions. In our Puerto Rico, it has been found necessary to promise tax exemptions to some of these corporations to get them to come in, and that tax exemption is for a period of twelve years from the time the company begins.

MR. STUNGEVICIUS: One of the problems that has been stressed is that of providing an atmosphere and climate favorable to private investment in these countries. The Latin American countries have wanted to safeguard what they considered to be their national interests, and this need of developing assurances and guarantees for private investments has been of foremost importance. Now, if those guarantees are forthcoming and if currency exchange is allocated to service loans, and paid dividends, to allow the free movement of capital, then capital should be more inclined to come freely into those countries.

That is certainly one of the problems that we have to solve. The businessmen have tried through recommendations to their respective governments to safeguard an atmosphere of freedom as to flow of capital and to guarantee fair treatment of foreign investments in their countries.

MR. JOHNSON: There is a definite shortage of capital in most of the Latin American countries and for that reason, since they are dependent on exports of raw material, and exports of a few materials which they are able to process, it seems that a stable economy can only be maintained by receiving money from the United States or other nations.

MR. MCBURNEY: Are you men suggesting that we may have made a mistake in sending millions and millions to Western Europe and neglecting our southern neighbors?

### 'First Things First'

MR. TAYLOR: No, I think it was a matter of first things first, and concern for the welfare of the world. It was not that Latin America was unimportant, but it was essential for the future well-being of the world that Western Europe get back on its feet. Before the war, Latin America did not trade continuously with the United States and there was no reason to believe it would afterward.

MR. LIETZ: I am inclined to agree with you on the basis of short term, if the crisis merits help for Europe at the moment. I still think we must not close our eyes to the necessity of long-term arrangements in Latin America.

MR. STUNGEVICIUS: You must realize that shortly after the end of the war, a survey by the Inter-American Council was made of the economic resources of the Latin American countries. It was found in the nations who are responsible for 90% of the trade of Latin America, and whose population was 120,000,000, that their consolidated national income was equivalent to the national income of

20,000,000 Europeans and 5,000,000 United States citizens. When you take that into account and think of building up the economic strength of this Hemisphere in the light of its tremendous natural resources, you cannot dispense for long the needs and potentials of the Western Hemisphere.

MR. JOHNSON: The problem is further complicated by the fact that in Latin America, most of the nations don't have business or too much business with their neighbors. They are dependent on the consumer in Europe or in the United States.

MR. MCBURNEY: We have been speaking here for a few minutes about some of the factors which militate against a close political and military effort. I am sure though there are many factors which draw these nations together. Johnson, do you think it is fair to say that these South American countries are pretty much committed to the democratic way of life, as we are?

### 'Democratic Progress'

MR. JOHNSON: I am convinced of that. If you read their constitutions, you see that they are molded on ours, and even where there are dictators, they object to being called dictators. Too, it is necessary to remember that in many cases, the Latin American countries didn't have the previous training in colonial government which the American colonists had. They are relatively young. They are making progress and I am certain no one on the panel would say there is a regression—there is definite progress in a democratic way of life.

MR. STUNGEVICIUS: Johnson, as you are a cultural expert, you know the cultural development of Latin America began earlier than in the United States, and it is also true that those nations were conceived and born in a struggle for the freedom of man. Their independence is identified with democratic principles. I think it is well to remember, for example, that Uruguay is a model of a democratic

republic. When its new President Martinez Trueba came into office, he restated those basic principles which I think voice the feeling of individual freedom and democracy.

MR. TAYLOR: Uruguay is typical and yet not typical. Of all of the Latin American countries, it is perhaps the most devoted to the principles of individual liberties as we conceive of them in this country. The average American, a person from the United States would have no difficulty at all in adapting himself to the point of view of the average Uruguayan.

MR. MCBURNEY: He would have difficulty with the point of view of the Argentinian?

### 'Constitution a Facade'

MR. TAYLOR: A tremendous amount of difficulty, because even though the Argentinian constitution is verbatim in Spanish the American Constitution in many individual clauses, the meaning has been so changed in practice that it has little relationship.

MR. LIETZ: I agree that the constitutionalism of Latin America is sometimes a mere facade. You have to look deeper and sometimes, too, we are disappointed, as when there was a great deal made of the tremendous progress, as it was called, of democracy in Costa Rica and Colombia; yet in the last few years there have been serious dislocations of their governments by revolution.

MR. JOHNSON: In spite of that, in most of the Latin American countries you will find that their neighbors object to dictatorships.

MR. TAYLOR: Certainly that has been shown up or proved by the mass opposition of Latin American editors to the present persecution of *La Prensa* by the Peron regime.

MR. JOHNSON: In connection with the constitution of Argentina, I should state it has been so revised recently by Peron, it is no longer modeled on our own. He controls the courts, he is also to control the press, the radio, and mention has been made of his



fight with *La Prensa*. Most of the American journalists in Mexico City recently spoke out in protestation against his actions there.

**MR. STUNGEVICIUS:** We must realize that the principles of non-intervention are binding in this Hemisphere.

**MR. TAYLOR:** That is true. The principle was accepted in 1933 in the Montevideo Conference, and it has been continued ever since. It was an outgrowth of American intervention in the Caribbean primarily.

### 'Solve Basic Problems'

**MR. LIETZ:** To get back to the point of democracy for a moment, I don't think we can discuss it here more than as an academic statement for Latin America until some of the basic problems underlying the situation are solved. I think when we consider the poverty and disease and illiteracy in those countries, we must come to the realization that no real democracy can work there until some of those basic problems are taken care of.

**MR. TAYLOR:** I have often maintained the basic principle of democracy is what you might call the "ideology of the full stomach." Until you get that to a larger extent than we have in a lot of the Latin American countries, you are not going to have practicing democracy.

**MR. JOHNSON:** Democracy depends on economic prosperity.

**MR. TAYLOR:** And education.

**MR. MCBURNEY:** How close are our cultural relations with South America?

**MR. JOHNSON:** In recent years they have improved greatly. We, for the first time in the States, are aware of Latin America's role in the world. I think the Latin Americans too, are greatly interested in us. The establishment of information centers, libraries, the exchange of professors and students have accomplished a great deal. Just last year, I think there were 3000 Latin American students studying in our universities.

We have film libraries and records which are distributed or they may go to the library to listen. I feel also that the Latin Americans, through the acquisition of English, are coming to know more and more of the States. There are thousands of Latin Americans who are studying English. We have assisted in the instruction by holding summer courses for the teachers of English in the various Latin American capitals. I feel that our stock has gone up immensely in Latin America as a result of our cultural program. Just recently, Brazil became aware of the importance of this. In the month of October of the past year, Brazil signed a mutual contract with the United States and it, too, is embarking on a cultural program. We have recently established cultural centers in Paraguay and Montevideo, Uruguay.

### 'War of Ideas'

**MR. LIETZ:** I believe that is a fine summary of the program, Johnson. I might mention, too, that it is on the level of ideas that we have to wage this war to a great extent. But on the other hand, there is a danger I would like to point out. There is a danger in these cultural relations of what might be termed the attempt to impose some kind of an official way of life or some kind of a way of life which we consider possibly the common way or American way of doing things.

**MR. TAYLOR:** As long as we keep sending movies down there . . .

**MR. LIETZ:** There is certainly a good way to get off the track.

**MR. JOHNSON:** Many of our novels—Steinbeck has been read down in the Latin American countries. O'Neil's plays are given in the centers and also in the theaters, so I don't think there is too much danger in their getting a false impression of the States and the culture.

**MR. STUNGEVICIUS:** We must not overlook that this should be a two-way trade in ideas which should include ideas brought to this country from

Latin America. Spanish and Portuguese languages ought to be learned here and a better knowledge of the culture of Latin America would go a long way toward consolidating further unity in the Hemisphere. I think we should realize that our economic development is parallel to a development of ideas and the trade of ideas.

MR. MCBURNEY: Are our economic interests complementary in the present emergency?

MR. STUNGEVICIUS: They are complementary as to needs and they should not be antagonistic. Among the big imports of this country, 90% of the coffee comes from Latin America, 86% of the cane sugar, 61% of the oil, 46% of the wool, some of it from Uruguay. . . .

MR. MCBURNEY: What do they take from us?

### Economic Situation

MR. STUNGEVICIUS: Forty-four per cent of the exports of automobiles and trucks, 40% of all textiles, 38% of all chemicals, 30% of all machinery, 30% of steel and iron products exported. I should mention that in 1949, the United States sold 40% of all its exports to Latin America and the importance of Latin America to the United States as a source of important raw materials will increase both in the defense period and subsequently. The question is which will be given favored treatment, help for the industrialization of South America, or industrialization only insofar as it helps defense?

MR. MCBURNEY: How would you answer that question?

MR. STUNGEVICIUS: I think Assistant Secretary of State Miller in a recent conference declared the United States will favor the industrialization of Latin America first only insofar as it helps defense. I think we should not overlook the needs of the civilian economy of Latin America. In the plans that are now in progress, the economic development of Latin Amer-

ica should be continued, if we are to retain the good will and the progress that we have been trying to consolidate in recent years.

MR. MCBURNEY: While you are speaking, you will forgive me for asking if the Latin Americans are paying as much for our exports as we are paying for coffee?

MR. STUNGEVICIUS: The Latin Americans or Brazil?

MR. MCBURNEY: It is almost a dollar a pound.

### South American Trade

MR. STUNGEVICIUS: We have found in Latin America that certain United States goods brought into South America went up almost three times as much as other Latin American goods which were exported into this country. That is the case of coffee.

MR. MCBURNEY: We are not paying too much for coffee?

MR. JOHNSON: Many of our organizations in the United States are convinced that this is not a program just for the war. For instance, Rockefeller, through the American Association for Social and Economic Development, has contributed to the Venezuelan economy. They have inaugurated new works and improved the rural conditions of Venezuela. They have furnished some capital and eventually, as soon as the Venezuelans are able to do so, the International Association will withdraw from the country and possibly proceed to another.

MR. LIETZ: I think this formula you have given us, Johnson, is something that could be developed further. It is one of the outstanding difficulties with Latin America, as Mr. Stungevicius pointed out, when we import the raw materials from Latin America, we help to keep them in a type of colonial economy where we require them to send raw materials and we in turn send our manufactured goods. It is the resentment against that kind of thing that we feel so keenly in our relations with Latin America.



MR. TAYLOR: One thing about our sending American goods down to Latin America should be considered. It is a problem, of course, of trying to get as much as we can to them and it is a problem of allocating what is available. After all, we may allocate, but at the same time in a war situation, or semi-war situation such as we have now, only so much is available. You can't expect a political decision to affect what the physical plants in a country can put out.

### Danger of Economic Failure

MR. STUNGEVICIUS: The danger of overburdening any one nation or group of nations with the financial and economic weight of war machinery designed to cope with the current world crisis should not be overlooked. We must see to it that neither the United States nor the other nations in this Western Hemisphere will become bankrupt or seriously impair their national credit. To open the door to an economic defeat from within would pave the way to extremist ideologies.

MR. LIETZ: I think we must be tolerant of their protective tariff, of their attempt to expand their internal industry, even though maybe at times it does come into competition with ours. We must not always desire the kind of situation you have in the case of sugar, where an act of the United States Congress can turn some of these countries from rags to riches.

MR. MCBURNEY: In discussing economic cooperation with South America in the present emergency, on what basis should it be discussed, gentlemen? On the basis of equal sacrifice

for all? Or in terms of each getting what it can?

### 'Equitable Sacrifice'

MR. STUNGEVICIUS: It is generally accepted that equal sacrifice is essential for hemispheric cooperation. But we should understand that the problem of basic strategic materials, increasing them and assuring their production, providing for and increasing the transportation facilities, providing effective distribution and balance through private business channels—these problems require our preferred and immediate attention in the Western Hemisphere for defense and the preservation of a civilian economy. Equitable sacrifice based on the relative economic standing of each nation in the Western Hemisphere is the only way to preserve our way of life.

MR. JOHNSON: Brazil has just made the point that it is trying to get what is necessary so they can protect their own economic position.

MR. LIETZ: I mustn't allow us to forget either the basic problem: For instance, the per capita of income of people in Argentina is \$346; it goes down in Haiti and Ecuador to an annual income of \$40, while the United States is \$1120.

MR. TAYLOR: But you can get a good steak in Argentina for less than you can here.

MR. MCBURNEY: How much direct military support do you think we are going to get from these countries, Johnson?

MR. JOHNSON: It will be very little in terms of men. In terms of strategic material, Latin America can produce two-fifths of the strategic materials which are needed. . . .





## Suggested Readings

Compiled by Eugen Eisenlohr  
and M. Helen Perkins, Reference Department,  
Deering Library, Northwestern University.



DUGGAN, LAWRENCE. *The Americas: The Search for Hemispheric Security*. New York, Henry Holt and Co., 1949.

Basic facts concerning our postwar and present relations with the other American republics. Includes a summary of social and historical background of the twenty-one republics and a synopsis of Inter-American Conferences from 1826-1948.

GUERRAN, EDWARD O. *Roosevelt's Good Neighbor Policy*. New Mexico, University of New Mexico Press, 1949.

A discussion of the numerous treaties and conferences which have built good will. A section on the Truman Administration policy has been included.

MACDONALD, A. F. *Latin American Politics and Government*. New York, Thomas Y. Crowell Co., 1949.

A presentation of recent political history and the governmental setup in South and Central America.

United Nations. *Economic Affairs Division*. "Economic Survey of Latin America, 1948." Lake Success, New York, International Document Service, 1949.

U. S. Tariff Commission. "... Latin America as a source of strategic and other essential materials. A report on strategic and other essential materials, and their production and trade with special reference to the Latin American countries and to the U. S. ..." Washington, U. S. Government Printing Office, 1941.

*The Atlantic* 186:12-14, S., '50. "Latin America."

Latin America, with the exception of Guatemala, has resisted and banned Communism. Latin nations realize where the common danger lies and want no part of it.

*Business Week* p. 121-25, S. 23, '50. "War Boom Roars Around the World."

Brazil fears cutoff of U. S. goods; Mexico imports more U. S. goods than it can handle; Puerto Rico is stock piling skilled labor toward the event of a manpower shortage in U. S. plants.

*Colliers* 127:18-19, Ja. 27, '51. "We're Building a Better Hemisphere." J. W. WHITE.

Living standards have been boosted by the American Association for Social and Economic Development.



*Current History* 18:8-11, Ja., '50. "The Complicated Caribbean; Latin America in the News." H. B. MURKLAND.

The Caribbean area as a whole leads a precarious economic existence. Dictatorship is the traditional form of government. An effective attempt can be made to solve the political and economic problems of this area through the Organization of the American States.

*Harper's Monthly* 201:58-66, D., '50. "Venezuela Booms."

In the past fifteen years Venezuela has made tremendous strides forward. She is a shining example of successful use of the Good Neighbor Policy.

*New Leader* p. 6-7, F., '51. "How IROW Was Born." V. ALBA.

The Inter-American Regional Organization of Workers will function as the American section of the International Confederation of Free Trade Unions (ICFTU). This union is independent both of Communistic control and the numerous Fascist dictatorships of the Latin American countries. The 28 million workers of IROW are well aware of the dangers of Communism and will do their utmost to resist same.

*Newsweek* 37:46, Ja. 29, '51. "What Latin Nations Need."

Latin America wants to build up its own industries and needs technical assistance and industrial know-how.

*Political Science Quarterly* 65:353-75, S., '50. "Chile a Communist Battleground." S. C. BLASIER.

The Communist Party until 1948 has been stronger and more influential in the government affairs of Chile than in any other American country. Should there be a sudden depression or severe military disturbance, a mass uprising might sweep them into power.

*Scholastic* 57:11, D. 6, '50. "Uruguay Holds Elections."

Uruguay has a better record for democratic government than any other South American nation.

*United Nations World* 4:64-5, O., '50. "Not Tomorrow but Today."

A brief survey of Brazil's potentialities of becoming one of the great nations. A listing of both her assets and liabilities is included.

*United States Dept. of State Bulletin* 24:8-10, Ja. 1, '51.

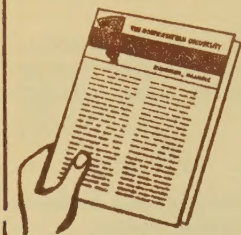
United States requests meeting of Organization of American States. Communism threatens Inter-American Security.

*United States Dept. of State Bulletin* 22:1011-16, D. 25, '50. "Economic Aspects of Inter-American Relations." E. G. MILLER, JR.

More than half the value of our imports from Latin America consists of strategic raw materials. The welfare of Latin America is linked with that of the United States.

*World Affairs (London)* ns. 4:83-98, Ja., '50. "Which Way Latin America?" S. G. INMAN.

A summary of its political and economic condition, and its prospects.



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